

In the claims

1-13. (Cancelled).

14.(Currently Amended) In a network environment where messages relating to faults that occur in the network over time are stored as rows in a database having a finite amount of memory allocated for storing the messages, a fault message purge procedure comprising:

~~executable computer code residing in a memory that expunges~~ expunging a
predetermined number of the rows in the database at the end of a current period; ~~when~~
~~executed, the predetermined number of rows to be expunged comprising~~

determining the predetermined number prior to beginning the step of expunging
by:

~~determining a function of~~ a rate at which the messages are being stored in
the database for the current period, a size of the rows in the database, the finite amount of
memory allocated for storing the messages in the database, a period at which the
computer code is executed, and a period of time for which information relating to the
faults is to be retained in the database;

~~applying a function that specifies that~~ the predetermined number of the rows to be
expunged ~~being about~~ is 45,000 where the rate at which the messages are stored in the
database is ~~about~~ 15 per second, the size of the rows in the database is ~~about~~ 1.5
kilobytes, the finite amount of memory allocated for storing the messages in the
databases is ~~about~~ 5 gigabytes, the period at which the computer code is executed is ~~about~~
once per hour, and the period of time for which information relating to the faults is to be
retained is ~~about~~ 10 days, the function further specifying that when the rate at which the
messages are stored in the database increases to 50 per second for the current period, then
the predetermined number is increased to 1,500,000.

15.(Currently Amended) The procedure of claim 14 comprising ~~additional~~
~~executable computer code residing in a memory that, when executed, maintains~~
maintaining a log file of all the messages saved to and expunged from the database.

16.(Currently Amended) The procedure of claim 14 comprising ~~additional executable computer code residing in a memory that, when executed, monitors~~ monitoring the expunging of the messages from the database ~~when the other executable computer code is executed~~ to ensure that the expunging of the messages from the database functions properly.

17.(Currently Amended) The procedure of claim 16 ~~wherein the additional executable computer code further comprises instructions to re-execute~~ further comprising re-executing the ~~other executable computer code~~ step of expunging if the expunging of the messages from the database does not function properly.

18.(Previously Presented) The procedure of claim 14 wherein the network comprises a telecommunications network.

19.(Previously Presented) The procedure of claim 18 wherein ~~the~~ memory in which ~~the~~ executable computer code for performing the expunging resides comprises a fault database.